



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR PAT QUINN

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CONTACT: Brooke Anderson (o. 312-814-3158; c. 312-590-0195)
Annie Thompson (o. 217-782-7355; c. 217-720-1853)

Governor Quinn Signs Law to Overhaul School Performance Reporting

New School Report Cards to Help Parents and Communities Measure Performance

CHICAGO – January 24, 2012. As part of his ongoing commitment to reform education in Illinois, Governor Pat Quinn today signed legislation that will give parents and communities more information about their schools' performance than ever before. The new law makes changes to school report cards, and report cards for school districts, in an effort to continue improving the state's primary and secondary education system. This law was the result of ongoing work by the Governor's P-20 Council, which was formed in 2009 to work with teachers, administrators and other stakeholders to improve education in Illinois.

"Every child in Illinois deserves access to a good, well-rounded education and we want every parent to know how their child's school is performing," Governor Quinn said. "Empowering parents and communities with this information increases accountability in our schools and allows us to better judge what works and what can be done better."

Sponsored by Rep. Linda Chapa LaVia (D-Aurora) and Sen. Kimberly Lightford (D-Maywood), House Bill 605 makes changes to the report cards submitted to parents, the Governor, the General Assembly and the State Board of Education starting in the 2013-2014 school year for elementary, middle and high schools statewide. The new cards will help the state better evaluate the success of schools, programs and districts by allowing comparisons between similar schools across the state, as well as current and past outcomes and progress.

The revamped report cards will include:

- School characteristics and student demographics (school enrollment; racial and ethnic background; # of low income students; per pupil expenditure)
- Curriculum information (availability of AP classes; availability of foreign language classes; school personnel resources; dual credit enrollment)
- Student outcomes (percentage of students meeting and exceeding state standards; graduation rates; percentage of college-ready students)
- Student progress (number of students entering kindergarten ready to learn; student growth measures; percentage of students entering high school on track for college or career)
- School environment (teacher and principal retention; percentage of students and teachers with fewer than 10 absences; measures of school learning climate)

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"Every child in Illinois, regardless of background or ethnicity, deserves an effective education," P-20 Council Chairman Miguel Del Valle said. "Knowing how schools serve students and their communities is key to understanding how we improve our education system as a whole."

"The first step towards improving our schools is knowing where we stand," Rep. Chapa LaVia said. "Giving parents, teachers, administrators and lawmakers the information they need to make decisions about the future of our children is the responsible thing to do for our communities and our education system."

"Parents have a right to know how their child's school is performing," Sen. Lightford said. "The new report card is important from both an informational and a transparency standpoint, and will allow us to track vital information about student progress and determine what policies and practices are working and how we can do better. It's an essential tool for parents and educators alike."

HB605, which passed the General Assembly unanimously, follows historic education reform Governor Quinn signed into law last year, which facilitated longer school days and stronger standards for teachers. The new cards (example attached) are a result of collaboration between the Governor's P-20 Council, the Illinois Federation of Teachers, school districts, state lawmakers and education advocacy groups from across the state.

The new law goes into effect immediately.

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